

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## HB 1270

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**C 201 L 09**  
Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Permitting electronic signatures on applications for public assistance and for benefits administered by the health care authority.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Green, Cody, Dickerson, Ericksen, Upthegrove, Springer, Roberts and Nelson; by request of Department of Social and Health Services and Health Care Authority.

**House Committee on Early Learning & Children's Services**  
**Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care**

**Background:**

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) administers a variety of public assistance programs, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, Medicare, and General Assistance for the Unemployable (GAU). The Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) administers seven health benefit programs, including health care plans for low-income persons, tribal members, and state employees.

The DSHS accepts electronic signatures for the processing of applications in some programs, such as TANF and GAU. The DSHS does not, however, allow electronic signatures for applications under the Medicare or Medicaid programs because federal guidance for administering these programs indicates that states should first have in place a state law expressly allowing for electronic signatures before accepting such signatures for Medicaid and Medicare applications. The HCA allows documentation for eligibility to be submitted via electronic means, to be printed, sent to the applicant, and returned to the agency via the mail. Electronic signatures do not change program eligibility standards and do not alter other information verification processes relating to an applicant's income or residency status. Like physical signatures, electronic signatures are made under penalty of perjury.

**Summary:**

The DSHS and the HCA are authorized to accept electronic signatures for all programs the agencies administer. Applications must have either a physical signature or an electronic signature. An electronic signature is defined as a signature in electronic form attached to or logically associated with an electronic record to allow a paperless method for signing a

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document. This may include a sound, symbol, or process attached to or logically associated with the electronic record and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the record.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House	97	0
Senate	45	0

**Effective:** July 26, 2009